

EXHIBIT G

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
AUSTIN DIVISION**

**BOOK PEOPLE, INC., VBK d/b/a BLUE
WILLOW BOOKSHOP, AMERICAN
BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION,
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN
PUBLISHERS, INC., AUTHORS
GUILD, INC., COMIC BOOK LEGAL
DEFENSE FUND,**

Plaintiffs,

v.

**MARTHA WONG in her official capacity
as chair of the Texas State Library and
Archives Commission, KEVEN ELLIS in
his official capacity as chair of the Texas
Board of Education, MIKE MORATH in
his official capacity as Commissioner of
Education,**

Defendants.

CASE NO.

DECLARATION OF JEFF TREXLER

I, Jeff Trexler, Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, do declare:

1. My name is Jeff Trexler. I am over twenty-one (21) years of age and am fully competent to testify about the matters contained herein. The following statements are made within my personal knowledge and are true and correct.

2. I am the Interim Director of the Board of the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (“CBLDF”). I have held this position since 2020.

3. The CBLDF is a nonprofit organization founded in 1986 dedicated to protecting the legal rights of the comic arts community. With a membership that includes creators, publishers, retailers, educators, librarians, and fans, the CBLDF has defended dozens of First Amendment

cases in courts across the United States and led important educational initiatives promoting comics literacy and free expression.

4. In recent years, the comic arts have received widespread recognition for their value in expressing serious literary, artistic, political, and scientific content in genres across demographic categories, including middle-grade, young adult, and material addressed to older audiences. A particularly significant historical milestone in this regard was the awarding of a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 to Art Spiegelman for *Maus*, a graphic novel about the Holocaust. Subsequent decades have seen numerous other cartoonists and graphic novelists win significant awards, including Neil Gaiman, author of *The Sandman* (World Fantasy Award, 1991); Marjane Satrapi, author of *Persepolis* (Angoulême Coup de Cœur Award, 2013); Alison Bechdel, author of *Fun Home* (MacArthur Award, 2014); Ari Folman and David Polonsky, creators of *Anne Frank’s Diary: The Graphic Adaptation* (Will Eisner Comic Industry Award and the Munich Documentation Center for the History of National Socialism, 2019); Maia Kobabe, author of *Gender Queer* (American Library Association Stonewall Book Award and Alex Award, 2020); and Mike Curato, author of *Flamer* (Lambda Literary Award, 2021).

5. Comic artists, publishers and retailers are all subject to the requirements of House Bill 900 (the “Book Ban”).

6. Despite their accolades and obvious literary merit, all of the award-winning works listed above would likely be subject to restriction or removal under the definitions of “sexually relevant” and “sexually explicit” contained in the Book Ban.

7. Determining where books may fall in light of these vague categories is not at all clear, especially in light of recent mischaracterizations of certain graphic novels as obscene,

pornographic, or otherwise “harmful to minors” despite the books’ demonstrable and widely recognized artistic, meritorious, and serious value for minors.

8. *Maus*, for instance, is one of the most respected graphic works of our generation and a pillar of Holocaust studies. But it contains a single image of a partially nude woman. Under the Book Ban, that would appear to be enough to qualify as “sexually relevant” material, subject to restriction and parental approval. That single image could also lead to a total ban, depending on who is performing the multi-layered contextual analysis required by the Book Ban. Losing this important work in libraries and classrooms would be a detriment to Holocaust education and a disservice to those who attempt to keep its memory alive.

9. Similarly, the illustrated *Anne Frank’s Diary: The Graphic Adaptation* could be subject to restriction or ban based on a brief description of male and female body parts. This work undoubtedly has societal valuable and clearly suitable for older students, but the Book Ban provides no mechanism for evaluating works based on their suitability for certain ages, nor does it allow for rating books on age-appropriate scale.

10. Should books like these be banned from public school libraries, Texas youth will not have available to them accurate and significant renditions of history that both help to educate about our past and help society not repeat grotesque wrongs, such as the Holocaust, in the future.

11. Many more works of equal merit are likely to be restricted or banned based on the Book Ban.

12. The public nature of the Book Ban’s ratings could also have a stigmatizing effect on comic works, depressing the market for these works.

13. For creators in the comic arts, these restrictions would substantially limit their ability to write freely on topics of their choosing and to have their work purchased by school districts and available to students.

14. Retail members and publishers are also subject to the rating system through their sales to public schools. The Book Ban would force comic retailers to engage in compelled speech by rating books based on criteria with which they do not agree.

15. These retailers would also be required to issue recalls for books that the State disfavors, forcing them to participate in the removal of important works from library shelves—a process with which they fundamentally disagree.

16. If the Book Ban is allowed to take effect, it will unconstitutionally compel the speech of retailers and publishers, while chilling the speech of comic artists.

17. I hereby declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the above is true and correct.

Executed this 24th day of July, 2023.

/s/ Jeff Trexler

Jeff Trexler